

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

In claim 1, line 7, replace "receiving" with --splitting a portion of--.

Please cancel claims 2 and 11.

In claim 5, line 1, before "computer" insert --personal--.

C1  
6. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said first sound processing mechanism is a sound card configured to run an audio streaming program and configured to transmit said network audio signal in the form of packets addressed only to said second sound processing mechanism.

Sub F1  
C2  
8. (Amended) A method for effecting audible communication between a local system and a remote system over a Wide Area Network (WAN), comprising the steps of:  
configuring a remote communication mechanism in said remote system to receive a transmission signal;  
converting said transmission signal into an analog audio output signal;  
processing said analog audio output signal into packets for transmission over said WAN as a [network audio signal] stream of audio packets;  
receiving and processing said [network audio signal] stream of audio packets to provide a continuous audio signal at said local system.

9. (Amended) The method of claim 8 in which said remote [modem] communication mechanism is configured to communicate with automated systems that incorporate intelligence to gather status information and such status information is transmitted to said remote communication mechanism as a transmission signal.

10. (Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the transmission signal received by said remote communication mechanism is generated by a remote modem resident with a remote computer system.

In claim 12, line 4, before "audio" insert --analog--.

In claim 13, line 2, before "audio" insert --analog--.

In claim 14, line 1, before "computer" insert --personal--.

In claim 15, line 2, before "audio" insert --analog--.

In claim 16, replace "network audio signal" with --stream of packets--.

Please add the following claims:

19. (NEW) An apparatus for communicating audio signals between a telephone interface of a remote modem and a monitoring station via a packet network comprising:  
a signal converter electrically connected to said telephone interface of said remote modem and electrically converting between said telephone signal and an electrical audio signal;  
an interface machine, electrically connected with said converter, for processing said electrical audio signal to generate a transmitted stream of encoded audio data packets and transmitting said stream into a packet network, and for receiving an output stream of encoded audio data from said packet network, and for processing said output stream into an electrical audio signal to said signal converter;  
a monitoring station for receiving said transmitted stream of encoded audio data packets via said packet network and processing said transmitted stream to generate a continuous output audio signal, and for receiving an audio input signal and processing said signal to generate said output stream of audio data packets, and for transmitting said output stream into a packet network;  
whereby an operator at said second interface machine can listen to the telephone signals of said remote modem and can generate audio signals to be converted into remote telephone signals, without having an electrical audio path from the remote modem to the operator location.

20. (NEW) The apparatus of claim 19 in which said signal converter is a telephone line interface for providing impedance matching and voltage conversion between said telephone signal and an audio input and audio output of said first interface machine.